CHICAGO HEIGHTS TERMINAL TRANSFER R. R. CO.

OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT.

G. M. WEST,
SUPERINTENDENT.

CHICAGO HEIGHTS, ILL., Dec 5th, 1903.

Mr J. M. Egan,

President Central of Georgia Ry.,

Savannah, Ga.

Dear Sir:-

Possibly you may recall me having met you several times while you were on the L. S. & I. at Marquette, I then and for many years being with the C. & N. W. Ry., on the Peninsula Division. My reason for now addressing you is et forth in the following communication, which I trust will receive more than a passing thought.

Having been for the past 17 years thoroughly familiar with the topography and possibilities of that portion of West Florida lying between the Alabama state line and the Gulf, I was selected in November 1902, by the promoters here of the Florida Grand Trunk Railway to meet certain capitalists, and present to themfrom a railway stand point, and a very complete knowledge of the country, the advantages to be derived, traffic to be secured, through building a line from Dothan, Alabama, to Saint Andrews, St Josephs Bay, and Appalachicola. Owing to the failure to get a satisfactory legal assignment of the charter, the project fell through, though I had ample capital offered me at that time to build the line, had it been possible to have obtained the charter. Thereafter I had some correspondence along the same lines, with the Birmingham, Columbus & Saint Andrews Railroad Company. who are yet trying to secure capital to build a line from Birmingham to Saint Andrews.

You are aware that as yet there is no line west of the Appalachicola river and Pensacola, running north andsouth; a section of country 60 miles by 100 or over, that through recent development by the lumber men, and naval stores interests, would now furnish a paying local business to a road, and secure to the road first reaching Saint Andrews

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the finest natural harbor on the entire Gulf Coast. This may seem to be a very broad statement but I invite the most thorough investogation thereof. It is well known there are but few good harbors on the Gulf coast. New Orleans can only be reached through navigating a tortuous channel for 200 miles; Mobile is 40 miles distant from the Gulf, and its one channel only kept open by constant dredging; Pensacola has a fine harbor, but its railway dock privileges are already monopolized by the L. & N., and it even has not the safe harbor that Saint Andrews bay affords.

The latter to day presents the best and only opportunity for the opening of a safe and commodious harbor, of any place along the coast. Government engineers reported that for an expenditure of $50.000 twent onefeet of water could be had across the bar, and at an expenditure of $500.000 thirty one feet could be secured, and maintained, at a trifling expense thereafter. This cannot be said of the bar at Pensacola or the Mississippi jetties. There is now fifteen feet of wate on the bar. Inside, the harbors has a depth for miles, and where it is landlocked, of from 35 to 50 feet. And it has room enough tocare for the commerce of the world, and the finest point to be found for a Naval Station, or training school; with deep water close to the shore; high banks; and that far from the pass and Gulf roadway that no hostile fseit could reach it to damage it.

At present the deep places close to the shore are in the hands of those who would join in giving the first road there such lands as they might require at a nominal sum; and these terminals at no distant day will be of immense value to any road. It is the most direct route for all that traffic seeking the Gulf from east of the Alleghanies, and from the central west, and with the lieses now in to Dothan would be a very

direct route for the north east and north west to reach the Gulf, and the soon to be Isthmus trade. In fact for the trade referred to this point presents the most logical and promising port for the development and caring for it of any on the north Gulf coast.

St Josphs Bay, which would be on the route from Saint Andrews to Appalchicola, would be worth attention, as it has been a harbor of refuge for vessles on the western Gulf coast, ever since they began to sail thereon. Two or more lines have been projected in the past three years, with this as a Gulf terminal. It however does not offer the many advantages that Saint Andrews Bay does.

Appalachicola is a flourishing city of 5.000 inhabitants, the present terminus of two river steamboat lines, and one or more Gulf lines, the business of which would surely be secured by the lines I have proposed. Besides this trade this place offers a large amount of high class freight, it having the largest sash, door, and cypress lumber industry in the United States.

There is now a good naval stores and lumber trade throughout the portion of West Florida contiguous to the line proposed, and this now has to be railed or lightered to Pensacola. All of this business the line referred to would get.

. . . I have been overthe proposed route with Mr Payne, of the D. S. S. & A. and Mr Selden, of the C. & N. W, and at present prices have figures to show that the road could be constructed at a cost not to exceed $10.000 permile. There is no heavy grading; no rock; no streams of any accant; and the right of way can be cleared in many place at a trifling cost. Often a transit line can be run a mile without striking any obstrcution. There is a good soft water supply for locomotives, ties can be had for 25 cents each, and bridge timber at $12 per M.

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I have much material relative to the route, traffic, terminals, &c., which I secured, and if your people are interested in such a projet I would be pleased to prsent the mattee more fully to them either through correspondnce or personal interview. I have a home at saint Andrews, and shall be there through the holidays. I have no lands to sell or personal interests to be conserved, except that I have been and am anxious to get a railway in there, and I feel that it is a subject worthy the prompt attention of any line seeking a future valuable port on the Gulf, and terminal facilities can now be secured there almost for the asking which in a very short time will be of vast importance and great value to any railway line.

Truly yours